

World's Finest I: Getting to Know You

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Summary: Superboy gets to know fellow teenaged crimefighter Robin a little better. Slash. [Tim/Kon]

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by 'rith (Kerithwyn Jade, kerithwyn@yahoo.com)

Archive: Ask, and ye shall receive. Warnings: M/M slash. If this concept disturbs you, read no further. Fandom: Modern comicsverse. Robin and Superboy, sittin' in a tree.... Timing: Set just after *World's Finest 3,* the first modern Robin-Superboy team-up, in which our intrepid young heroes faced off against Metallo and Poison Ivy. Post-Clench, pre-Cataclysm, pre-Young Justice. Disclaimer: All characters property of DC Comics. What I have done with them is mine.

> I just couldn't stop thinking about it, you know? How Ivy put me under her spell, and how Robin risked his life to snap me out of it. Not to mention how he almost got taken apart by Metallo on the way. There was a bad pattern shaping up, about me and lady criminals, and I didn't like it. <p>

It took another couple of days-yeah, I'm slow sometimes-to realize that I wasn't really thinking about her, or the whole sitch, but about *him.* Robin, I mean. The "Boy Wonder"-what a nickname to be saddled with! Except after seeing him in action, it really fit. Here I am, next best thing to Superman, and this guy with no powers totally saved my butt.

So I really just wanted to say "thanks" again, but on the whole flight over to Gotham I knew there was something else. Like how we worked really well together, when I finally shut up and listened to him. Like how good he looked in that costume of his.

That surprised me but hey! I'm flexible. Figure I can't help it, considering where I came from. The boys at Cadmus Labs used Superman as a base model when they put me together, but a lot of other stuff went into the tank as well. No room for prejudice in this little clone.

So I cruised around Gotham, lookin' for Rob. I sure didn't want to run into that boss of his-I ain't ashamed to admit the big bad Batman scares even me. Heck, I hear even Superman takes his orders from Batman, up on the Justice League watchtower.

Must've been my lucky night, 'cause I spotted him right away. Robin, I mean. He was crouched on the roof of an old building near the docks, holding a pair of binoculars. I took a quick look around but didn't see anything, so I figured he wasn't really busy. I landed behind him, trying to take him by surprise.

Sheyeah, *right.*

This wasn't my night.

I'd been trying to get a lead on some of Penguin's shadier dealings-he'd been pretty quiet for months, but Batman and I knew he was working to set himself up as *the* crime boss of Gotham. The thug I was following decided that he'd rather pass out drunk in a dockside tavern than run Oswald's errands, I guess, so it was back to square one and scratch this goon off the list.

I saw the red blur in the sky and heard the "thump" of a flier landing behind me, and it wasn't hard to figure out who it was. Part of the training: know who your enemies are, and your allies too, because you never know when the latter might become the former.

A little paranoid for my taste, but Batman's the best, and being Robin was an opportunity I wasn't about to give up. So I'd learned, and I said,

"Little far away from your usual stomping grounds, isn't it, Superboy?"

I heard the muttered, "oh, man!" and smiled. Keep them off balance, that's what Batman always says. I turned around to see him looking unusually diffident, kicking at the rooftop and scattering shingles everywhere.

"Hey, Bird-Boy, how ya doin'?"

Okay, no crisis. "Were you just bored, or was there something you needed in Gotham?"

"Naw, I just..." he stopped kicking the roof and came over. "I've been thinking a lot about all that stuff that happened on Kauai, and I just wanted to say 'thanks' again, I guess."

Strange. Superboy didn't seem the type that spent a lot of time thinking about the past-he seemed more a "live in the moment" kinda guy. But whatever.

"Sure. No problem." If he just wanted to shoot the breeze, he was out of luck. Batman doesn't like other heroes hanging around Gotham; it's *his* turf, and they all know it. I think he believes in the "if you live there, they will come" theory: Super-villains gravitate to the homes of their chosen enemies. Metropolis regularly gets hammered by Superman-level threats, because Superman's there to deal with them. Gotham has *enough* trouble with our regular Arkham escapees without inviting others in to play. The whole Metallo thing had been a fluke, and I'd had no choice but to call Superboy in to deal with the nuclear-powered cyborg.

On the other hand, I was probably going to be working with him in the future-heroes of the same generation, that kind of thing-so it was worth my time to be friendly. God, that sounded like Bruce! He looks at *everything* as a threat or an opportunity, nothing in between. What I really meant was, I could see working with Superboy again, and if we were friends that would make it easier.

"So, uh, what's new?" Lame, Tim, very lame. I put on this costume and my social skills seem to disappear.

"Aw, you know. The usual. Take down a bad guy, get the gratitude, bodacious babes throw themselves at my feet...."

Babbling. I was babbling. I couldn't help it. He was so calm, like nothing ever phased him, and I was trying to work up my nerve to tell him what I was *really* there for. It started to seem like a really stupid idea, now that I was there with him in person.

But damn, he looked good.

Something I said struck him funny, anyway. "You get a lot of that? Uh, 'babes'?"

"Yeah. But you see one tanned Hawaiian chick, you've seen 'em all." BIG lie. And Tana would kill me if she ever heard me say that, never mind Roxy. But the idea of shootin' the breeze with *Robin* about women seemed weirder than weird, and it sure wasn't what I wanted to be doing anyway.

"Just Do It" oughtta be my motto. To heck with it-either he was gonna like it or he wasn't, and I wouldn't find out just by standing around.

So I took a deep breath, said "So, well, this is for everything you did, helping me and all," and kissed him.

Not the world's finest kiss or anything, I was too nervous to concentrate and he was too surprised to do anything. But he didn't shove me away, and I took that for a good sign. After a second I backed off, and waited for his reaction.

He was looking at me, kinda stunned by his expression, and suddenly I felt like I'd made a *huge* mistake. I couldn't really tell because of the mask that hides his eyes, but I was afraid that he was mad, or maybe he was thinking about telling someone that Superboy had groped

him, and I'd be kicked out of the hero biz. Or I dunno, something like that.

"Oh, man, Rob, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to upset you, I'm an idiot and I'm gonna leave now and we can just forget this whole thing, all right? C'mon, man, say something!"

"Uh..."

Damn. "Look, just forget it, I'm sorry, will you at least say it's okay?"

"It's...okay."

Not mad. He wasn't mad. He hadn't moved away. He was still looking at me.

Thin evidence, but now I had a mission. A real goal. I was gonna get a reaction out of him yet.

I know I push. I can't help it. Maybe it's something they stirred into my genetic soup at Cadmus, or maybe it's just me. Hey, if you're gonna go for it, you might as well go all the way.

He was eyeing me with this sly, smirky expression. "So...just how 'okay' was it?"

I was trying to figure that out myself. I'd never even *thought* about it, but I was still reeling with the shock that it'd been okay. More than okay. Nice.

My thoughts went something like this: "Okay, Tim, you are *not* going to have a sexual identity crisis on the rooftop of this cruddy old warehouse. You will *not* freak out like some raving homophobe. You will stand here and deal with this like a reasonable person, because that's what you are. A reasonable person. Who actually kinda liked that kiss, and what are you going to do about that?"

Batman always says that self-knowledge is our most powerful weapon. Knowing what you can and can't do. How far you're willing to go. How far you can push.

I wasn't about to let Superboy push *me.*

"Just...okay." His face fell, and I felt like I'd just kicked a puppy. I hated seeing that look on him, so... "I don't have enough basis for comparison, after all."

Hot diggidy damn. I don't know how I got so lucky, but I wasn't about to lose this chance.

"So, uh, you need more data, right?"

He looked as serious as ever, but I could tell. Oh, yeah, he was into it. "Well, I can't form a proper opinion with such a small

sample...."

Whooo. I knew an invitation when I heard one. I leaned over again and this time his mouth opened under mine and wow! that Boy Wonder could kiss. Before I knew it *he* was in charge, and I kinda liked it. I felt his arm slip around my waist and then he pulled me against him. I was so surprised, I stumbled and almost knocked him over.

"You okay there, Superboy?"

"Yeah! You just surprised me, that's all."

He smiled, a little smug. "Batman always says, do the unexpected-it keeps people off balance."

Unexpected, huh? I could do that. I grabbed him around the waist and took off, straight up into the sky. After a second he threw his arms out wide and laughed, really laughed, and I totally got off on hearing that sound. He seems so *serious* all the time-guess working with Batman, it's kind of a requirement of the job.

I love being Robin. It's the dream of a lifetime. Even if I someday quit doing this and go back to a normal life, I'll have had something more unique and exceptional than most people ever experience.

But this...

There's a moment when you're diving off the side of a building that's almost like flying. It's the most freeing and terrifying moment in the world. But then the line catches and you swing out over the street, pulled by the swing of gravity, and the illusion shatters.

There was no illusion here, only Superboy's hands on my waist and the pull of Earth, slowly losing her grasp.

He'll never know how much I envy him this, the gift of true flight.

He wove a lazy path over the city, and his hands started to wander. I still felt perfectly safe. He talks a lot about that famed "tactile telekinesis" of his-probably too much in the Batman view of the universe, since Rule Number One involves never letting your enemies (or allies) know your full range of abilities. But whatever he touches is subject to his telekinetic control, which meant that I wasn't going to fall unless he decided to drop me.

But still...I wasn't the only one who might be out tonight. God only knows what would happen if Bruce caught wind of this.

"Uh, Superboy?"

"Yeah?" He looked at me, eyes bright under the stars.

Decision time, Tim. Go with it-go with *him*-or call it quits right here.

I didn't know what was going to happen, or what he expected, or even what I was willing to do. Better to find out now, right?

Right. There's rationalization boy for you, never mind the fact that I was replaying that kiss over and over in my head and it got better every time.

I took a deep breath, and said, "I know somewhere a little more private...."

I gotta admit, I almost dropped him when he said that.

I mean, I'd been sneaking a grope in midair and all, but I guess I really didn't expect him to practically *admit* he was up for more.

Too cool.

He motioned toward Gotham Bay and I flew out over the water. On the way he pointed out Blackgate Prison and started telling me about its history, blah blah blah. I shoulda listened, I know, but I was *way* too distracted by the way his muscles flexed under my hands.

Maybe I think too much about sex; I dunno. I woke up out of the tank a teenager, y'know? Do other kids have more time to get used to the whole idea and all those feelings?

Sure, I thought about it a lot, but I hadn't done much more than grope at Knockout. Just thinking about that still makes me mad. All those times she called me "pup" and I thought it was cute, she was just laughing at me. Sometimes I'm an idiot.

Well, I wasn't gonna mess this up, whatever "this" was. I started it, but I sure didn't know what would happen next.

Way out in Gotham Bay, beyond Blackgate, there's an island that I'd been to a couple of times before. Awhile back, some rich developer thought it'd be a good idea to build a resort just outside Gotham, for those folks who couldn't afford the Bahamas. He landscaped the place with sandy beaches, but the money ran out before he built more than the shell of the resort. The island was abandoned.

These days, smugglers use it as a loading point before taking their cargo into or out of the city. Batman and I visit every couple of months to clear the place out. The last time had been only three weeks ago, so I figured it would still be deserted. Batman casts a long shadow of fear onto Gotham's criminal element.

"Hey, this is great!" His voice startled me, and I realized we'd been quiet on the way out past Blackgate. I was nervous as heck and maybe *he* wasn't as cocky as he seemed.

"W-what is?" I craned my neck up to see his face.

"The beach. It's not Hawaii, but it'll do." He grinned. "Hey, you

like swimming?"

"Sure, but..."

"But you can't get all your Bat-stuff wet, right, I get it." I had just enough time to think, "Uh-oh."

And then my clothes just...exploded off of me, and I fell.

Gotta give the guy points for style. I used my ever-handy tactile telekinesis to get his costume off fast-it's really *useful* sometimes!-and send him for a swim. Even surprised, he turned the drop into a pretty keen dive.

He came up and reached immediately for his face. Yeah, his mask was still on. I didn't need the secret identity gig but he obviously did, and it sure wouldn't have made him trust me if I'd peeked without his permission. Then he shouted up at me.

"This isn't Hawaii, Superboy! It's *cold!!*"

Oops.

Oh, well, a little cold wasn't gonna kill either of us. I dumped his stuff on the beach and peeled off my own costume.

"Watch this, Boy Wonder-I'll show you a *real* dive!" I flew up high, then straight down. At the last second I couldn't resist, and turned the dive into a cannonball.

I came up and started laughing, I couldn't help it, he looked like he wanted to yell at me and laugh at the same time. Finally he laughed too, and splashed me back.

"Oh, so that's how you wanna play?" I tackled him like we were gonna wrestle, and maybe that was part of it, but mostly I just wanted to touch him and find out if he felt as good as he looked.

Even in the cold of the water, his hands were warm.

We were rolling around, supposedly play-fighting like guys always do, except it was totally an excuse to touch each other. It was really strange but exciting, too.

Suddenly he stopped and looked me in the face. "Hey, can I ask you something?"

"Uh...sure."

"Can I kiss you again?"

Oh, right, *now* he had to ask! I didn't want to *think* about this anymore. I was here, and I was tired of analyzing everything to death.

"Well, if you'd stop talking and just do it...."

The look on his face was worth the joke. "ME?! Talk too much? It's you who...ah, screw it." He grabbed me and pulled me in.

It was like before, that powerful kiss, but different because we were naked. I felt his body against me and that was weird but nice. Okay, better than nice. It was, uh, arousing as hell and I know he felt the same way, because he moaned and his tongue crept past his teeth to touch mine, and *that* sent a shockwave down my spine.

Oh....wow....

He tasted *great.* He felt even better. He's really strong for a normal guy, lots of well-developed muscles. Mine came with the territory, but he must work out like crazy to stay in that kinda shape.

I could tell he hadn't done much before, but he got into it pretty quick. We were touching each other all over-well, almost-and I was so turned on I couldn't stand it. I reached down and touched him, and he gasped.

The thought came to mind and I giggled before I could help it.

"What so funny?!"

Whoops. *Not* a good idea to make him think I was laughing at him. Especially not now!

"Oh, just thinking...I guess they don't call you the 'Boy Wonder,' for nothing, huh?" I cracked up, I couldn't help it.

I thought he was gonna explode, he looked so mad, and then I felt *his* hand on me. "Not so bad yourself, 'Superboy.'"

We musta looked ridiculous, holding on to each other and howling like idiots.

"At least...we're not guilty...of false advertising!" he gasped out, and I laughed so hard I got a mouthful of water and went under.

He grabbed me and pulled me up, still laughing himself.
"Beach...before we drown!"

He caught my hand and got us to the beach with a short burst of flight. We collapsed onto the sand, still giggling. After a minute he rolled over and said, "Hey, man, I won't tell anyone if you won't."

I must have looked shocked at the idea that I'd ever tell anyone *anything* about this.

"No, not that! I mean that you have a sense of humor!" He chuckled.
"It'd ruin the whole spooky Bat-guy image."

"Oh. Yeah."

Suddenly, the identity facade seemed so *silly*-I wanted him to know me.

I reached up for the mask. "My name is T-"

A warm hand covered my lips, stopped me from peeling off the mask. He looked at me solemnly, more than I expected from the flighty, brash Superboy the world knew.

"S'okay man. You don't have to do it."

"But I want..."

"I got the feeling you have a good reason for keeping your secret. Something to do with Batman's identity, right?" I nodded, shaken. "I don't need to know. I'm flattered and all but, really, that's pressure I just *don't* need."

That was understanding I hadn't thought possible from him. It told me that whatever happened, here or later, Robin and Superboy would always be able to trust each other.

"But, y'know, *my* name is Kon-El. You can use it, if you want."

"'Conal'?"

"Huh? Oh-I never thought of that! No, it's 'Kon-EL,' Superman gave me that name. It means, 'of the house of El,' like him." He grinned. "I like the other one, though. Almost makes us sound like two regular guys. Conal and Rob."

"Hey, Conal?"

"Yeah?"

"You're talking too much again." This time I reached for him.

Somehow he pinned me under him, but that was just fine, 'cause everything he did felt great. It was amazing, like he knew exactly where to touch me, and how. So I started wondering.

"You sure you haven't done this before?"

"No, but I, uh..." he blushed. Wow, that was really cute. "I read a lot."

"About *this?!*" No way. Here I'd been so anxious about even kissing him, and...

"Not exactly. More like...about anatomy."

Oh. "Geez, Rob, if I knew I could actually *use* the stuff, I woulda studied harder in biology class!"

He smiled. "I doubt Shi-uh, my teachers would approve. It's all about pressure-points and nerve endings, not exactly stuff you learn in public school...."

"Secret ninja-fu, I get it. So, uh, show me something you learned!"

"Well, there's this..." he leaned down and ran his tongue slightly below my ear.

My whole body woke up and said, "hello!" at that. "Ohhhh..."

"And then there's this area of the neck, very sensitive...." I felt his teeth, very lightly, and couldn't wait anymore. I flipped him over and kissed him hard, tongue and everything. He really liked that, I could tell.

When I stopped he was breathing hard, and so was I. "Rob?"

I guess he wanted to make sure I was okay with this. But man, what a time to ask!

My voice was hoarse. "God, don't stop now."

"No way." He came down full-length against me, and groaned. "Oh, that feels good..."

"Uh-huh." I shifted a little under his weight, finding just the right position.

He lifted his head and smiled. "Oh, now I remember something." Before I knew what he doing, his mouth came down on my chest and licked my nipple. It was so intense I cried out and bucked against him, which set off tremors in a whole different area. He pushed back, thrusting against my thigh and his mouth at my throat, sucking hard, until I pulled his head up to kiss him again, my tongue playing on his. I reached down to touch him at the same time that he got ahold of me and then we were both *there,* perfect friction and together oh right there *now*....

...

...

Wow.

Superboy-Kon-El-was still lying on me, wearing the same dazed look I probably had. "Mmmmm...."

Rob stirred a little and I rolled to the side, but I wasn't moving any farther. No way, no how.

Man-o-man, I don't get good ideas that often, but *this* one had been tremendous. Who woulda guessed?

I heard Rob stand up and go down to the water, probably to wash up. Good idea. I didn't move.

"Sup-Kon-El? You okay?"

"Ohhh, yeah." I sat up. He had his costume in hand but hadn't put it back on yet; I guess he didn't want me to think he was too eager to leave. "Guess you have to get back, huh?"

"I'm sorry, I've got—"

I waved a hand at him. "Nah, don't worry about it, so do I. Just one thing?"

He came over and squatted down. "What's that?"

"Thanks."

"Oh. Uh, you, too." Then he shook his head. "Really. I mean it. I, uh, didn't expect this, but it was incredible."

"Yeah." I went and washed up quick, wondering what would happen next. I mean, I sure didn't come to Gotham expecting anything, and I didn't know what to do. All that implanted knowledge the Cadmus scientists stuffed into my brain, and I didn't have a clue.

Our costumes were back on, so we were Superboy and Robin again. I never felt like that before, like I had been someone else for a little while. I guess Robin feels like that, a lot. Weird.

"Ready to go?"

He nodded, and I picked him up and took off. It seemed like a longer trip back, and neither of us said a word.

Then we were over Gotham. "Down there's fine, anywhere downtown."

I landed and he stood, stretching.

"Uh, guess I should go...."

I thought it was gonna get all awkward, but Rob saved the whole thing. He smiled at me, and said, "Friends?"

"Always!" That was it-no strings, no promises, just friends. "World's Finest, the Next Generation!"

He laughed, and everything was cool.

"Well... 'night, Rob."

"Good night... Conal."

I thought about him all the way home.

End

file.